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with the probe card 12. A plurality of probe needles 7 are supported on the lower surface of the probe card substrate 12, and on the top of the probe card substrate 12 are provided a reinforcement member 13 for reinforcing the probe card substrate 12, and a plurality of ZIF connectors 11. A plurality of ZIF sockets 9 corresponding to ZIF connectors 11 are provided on the lower surface of the test head 10. The semiconductor elements 6 exchange a test input signal and test output signals with the tester 3, by means of the ZIF connectors 11 being coupled to the ZIF sockets 9. The ZIF sockets 9 incorporate springs and are connected to the ZIF connectors 11 by means of meshing action.--

## B.

## **IN THE CLAIMS**:

A clean version of the claims that have been amended appear below:

1. (Amended) A semiconductor element test apparatus comprising:

a stage on which a semiconductor wafer having semiconductor elements is to be mounted;

a probe card having a plurality of probe needles opposing the semiconductor wafer; and a probe card hold member for holding test probe card; and

the semiconductor elements are tested by bring the plurality of probe needles into contact with the semiconductor elements of the semiconductor wafer, wherein

the probe card has a probe card substrate for supporting the plurality of probe needles and a reinforcement member for reinforcing the probe card substrate, and the reinforcement member

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has a plurality of mount positions and counterbores of substantially the same depth and shape in each of the plurality of mount positions; and

the probe card substrate is attached to the probe card hold member through the reinforcement member at the counterbores by screws.

8. (Amended) A semiconductor element test apparatus comprising:

a stage on which a semiconductor wafer having semiconductor elements is to be mounted;

a probe card having a plurality of probe needles opposing the semiconductor wafer; and a probe card hold member for holding test probe card; and



the semiconductor elements are tested by bring the plurality of probe needles into contact with the semiconductor elements of the semiconductor wafer, wherein

the probe card has a probe card substrate for supporting the plurality of probe needles and a reinforcement member for reinforcing the probe card substrate, and the reinforcement member has counterbores of substantially the same depth and shape in a plurality of mount positions;

the reinforcement member comprises a peripheral section having a plurality of reinforcement arms, each reinforcement arm having the mount position, and a frame-shaped center section, and a reinforcement piece for two interconnecting mutually-opposing sides of the frame-shaped center section is provided in the center section; and

the probe card substrate is attached to the probe card hold member through the reinforcement member at the counterbores by screws.

10. (Amended) A method of testing a semiconductor element through use of a semiconductor test apparatus which brings a plurality of probe needles provided on a probe card into contact with semiconductor elements of a semiconductor wafer, wherein

the probe card has a probe card substrate for supporting the plurality of probe needles, and a reinforcement member to be used with the probe card substrate;

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the semiconductor element test apparatus has a probe card hold member having the probe card attached thereto;

the reinforcement member is attached to the probe card substrate and to the probe card hold member at a plurality of mount positions by means of screws;

counterbores of substantially the same depth and shape are formed in each of the respective mount positions on the reinforcement member; and

the probe card substrate is attached to the probe card hold member by means of the screws and by way of the counterbores.

## <u>REMARKS</u>

At the time of the Office Action dated December 4, 2002, claims 1-10 were pending and rejected in this application. Claims 1, 8 and 10 have been amended. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. Specifically, independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended to clarify that each mount position on a reinforcement member is provided with a counterbore of substantially the same depth and shape. Claim 8 has been amended to be placed in independent form by including of the limitations recited in independent claim 1 upon which claim 8 directly depends. Applicant submits that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue.